

IN THE CLAIMS

1-6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) A hand stamp comprising:

a first marking structure having a front surface adapted to print ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces of said first marking structure, wherein at least one of the peripheral edges of said first marking structure has a first pattern;

a second marking structure having a front surface adapted to print ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces of said second marking structure, wherein at least one of the peripheral edges of said second marking structure has a second pattern that matches the first pattern;

said first and second marking structures being assembled together with the first patterned peripheral edge of said first marking structure interlocking with the second patterned peripheral edge of said second marking structure so that said first and second marking structures can be assembled together in only one configuration, wherein at least one of the interlocked first and second patterned peripheral edges has a non-porous surface for preventing ink migration between said first and second marking structures.

8. (canceled)

9. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprises foam.

10. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise a mixture of thermoplastic resin and ink.

11. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first marking structure carries an ink of

a first color and said second marking structure carries an ink of a second color that is different than the first color.

12. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein the at least one edge having a non-porous surface is exposed to a light source for forming the non-porous surface.

13. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures are pre-inked marking structures.

14-21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein the interlocked patterned peripheral edges of said marking structures comprise foam.

23. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 22, wherein one of the interlocked patterned peripheral edges has a non-porous surface and the other of the interlocked patterned peripheral edges has a porous surface.

24. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise foam surfaces, and wherein at least one foam surface of said first marking structure is in direct contact with at least one foam surface of said second marking structure.